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ABSTRACT

The booklet explores the actual and potential relationship between citizenship education and consumer education. The purpose is to examine key assumptions supporting citizenship and consumer education and to identify basics that cut across these two approaches to social education. It is presented in four chapters. Chapter I defines both citizenship and consumer education and points out that the approaches have a common goal: that of developing peoples' social competence. It also lists assumptions regarding schooling, particularly that education is an effective way of achieving the goal, and assumptions regarding citizen and consumer roles, including that the two roles are separate. Chapter II discusses the relationship of citizen and consumer roles, which fuse when individuals make decisions that have consequences for all citizens, when economic decisions are made collectively in the political process, or when individuals consume government services. It also points out commonalities in the two roles, including that both are subject to the same historical forces, face common problems, occur in similar settings, and that people exhibit comparable behavior in both roles. Chapter III offers guidelines for linking citizenship and consumer education by listing seven citizenship competencies and suggesting several ways these can be used in consumer education. The conclusion is that the two roles are not separate, and that the linkages between citizenship and consumer education can provide one useful starting point for integrating social education. (CK)

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Citizenship and Consumer Education: Key Assumptions and Basic Competencies

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Paul Varnum was president of the chapter in 1957 and held numerous other leadership positions in our profession. His Phi Delta Kappa activities so personified what the ideal member should do for his chapter that an award was established in his name and is given annually to an outstanding member.

Our chapter is better because of the leadership Paul L. Varnum gave it.

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Introduction

In our complex society we often act simultaneously as citizens and as consumers. In Maryland, for example, high school students circulate a petition demanding a city council ban on the sale of "throwaway" bottles. In Florida citizens vote on a local referendum to establish a regional transit authority. In California a group of neighbors start a car pool as their contribution to reducing American dependence on imported oil. What are the implications for educators of the increasing fusion of citizen and consumer behavior?

This fastback examines the actual and potential relationship between citizenship education and consumer education. Despite their coexistence in the school curriculum since the turn of the century, citizenship and consumer education have been mutually isolated. This situation is symptomatic of a trend in social education that is unnecessary and undesirable.

Mutual isolation is unnecessary because both consumer educators and citizenship educators share a number of assumptions about educational change and schooling. Further, both are concerned with public policy issues and a common domain of human behavior. This common domain involves the blending of citizen and consumer roles.

Mutual isolation is undesirable because it deprives consumer and citizenship educators of the chance to cooperate in using limited curriculum time in the schools. Such isolation prevents consumer and citizenship educators from building a common base for their efforts to change education. Finally, isolation contributes to increasing specialization in social education.

As society has become more complex, educators have attempted to identify people's social behavior and to create instructional programs to deal with every dimension of that behavior. Thus, today we have not only civic and consumer education but also career education, law-related education, multicultural education, environmental education, energy education, global education, and values clarification/moral education, as well as education in the traditional academic subjects.

If the trend toward specialization continues, it may lead to serious problems in the curriculum. The rapidly increasing social and technological complexity of our society cannot be adequately mirrored in the education we offer children and youth. Neither they nor their teachers can be expected to appreciate ever more discrete and specialized segments of knowledge about their social world. At some point such fragmented education will cease to bear any resemblance to the problems people actually confront in daily life.

In this fastback my goals are to examine key assumptions that support our efforts at citizenship and consumer education and to identify basics that cut across these two approaches to social education. First I shall evaluate key assumptions in citizenship and consumer education. Then, by describing the connection between the two roles in contemporary society, I shall challenge a prevailing assumption that the citizen role and the consumer role should be treated independently in social education. Finally, I shall identify competencies common to our behavior as citizens and as consumers. These competencies become problem-solving tools. They provide a model for identifying elements common to citizenship and consumer education programs.

Citizenship and Consumer Education in Perspective

In the 1970s consumer education was seen largely as a way to provide buyers with ammunition for confrontation with sellers. Consumer education today generally combines information about the relationship between the price and quality of items with information about how to be an effective consumer in a modern, complex economy.

Consumer education entered the schools in the early 1900s through the home economics curriculum and was impelled by the 1917 Smith-Hughes (vocational education) Act. Since then consumer education has become widely scattered throughout the junior and senior high school curricula. Consumer education topics appear in distributive education; business and social studies courses; and in mathematics, industrial arts, and science classes. In recent years a number of state departments of education have begun to mandate or recommend course work dealing with economics or consumer issues.

Consumer education materials focus largely on improving student skills in managing personal finances. Teachers dealing with consumer education are more likely to stress objectives related to private consumption than those related to the skillful consumption of public services. Similarly, more attention is usually given to developing student awareness of problems in the market than to developing skills associated with methods of consumer organization, redress, and protection. Since the mid-1960s consumer education has enjoyed a revival in the schools. This can be traced in part to the continuing efforts of consumers to adjust to inflation, unemployment, and materials shortages in an increasingly technological society.

Citizenship education involves learning and instruction directed at the development of citizen competence, which can be defined as the quality of a person's participation in processes associated with group governance, such as making or influencing decisions, providing leadership, or acquiring information. The development of competent citizens is the overall goal of citizenship education.

In contrast to consumer education, citizenship education has been a responsibility of elementary and high schools since the early days of the Republic. Presently formal instruction in civic education is concentrated within the social studies curriculum. In the primary grades local communities and urban life are studied, and in the intermediate grades the U.S. Constitution, national government, and U.S. history are covered. At the junior and senior high level there are formal courses directly related to citizenship education. These include civics (grades 7, 8, or 9), state and local government/history (grades 7 through 12), U.S. history (grade 10 or 11), American government (grade 12), and problems of democracy (grade 12).

Assumptions Regarding Schooling

Citizenship and consumer educators share the goal of developing peoples' social competence, and both have assumed that formal education through the schools is an effective way to achieve that goal. This assumption is based on four related propositions:

1. Most U.S. citizens display deficiencies in citizen and consumer behavior.
2. Deficiencies in citizen and consumer behavior are correctable through education.
3. Schools are effective in delivering citizenship and consumer education to people.
4. Those interested in citizenship and consumer education can effect change in schools.

Deficiencies in Behavior. The proposition that there are important weaknesses in peoples' economic and political competencies is, of course, critical. Social science research, opinion polls, and national assessments lend support to the claims of consumer educators and citizenship educators that there are deficiencies in the way people behave

as citizens and as consumers. For example, recent assessments by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) have charted both a steady decline in the knowledge of the U.S. governmental system among 17-year-olds and a lack of basic consumer skills among young adults.[1] Other studies find that only a small percent of individuals possess the political skills and motivation to acquire information about the political system, to analyze complex policy problems, or to engage in cooperative problem solving. Studies by the Joint Council on Economic Education have documented the public's inability to deal competently with the economic aspects of public issues and with economic decisions in their daily lives.[2]

We can conclude from these and other studies that 1) people lack qualities and abilities that enable them to protect their self-interest, and 2) people lack qualities and abilities that enable them to protect and promote the public interest.

To some extent, traditional consumer education has emphasized a concern for protecting one's self-interest, while citizenship education has emphasized a concern for promotion of the public interest. Recently, however, as if to reflect the fusion of consumer and citizen roles, some consumer educators have grown more concerned with the public interest, and some citizenship educators have begun to stress the development of the individual's capacities to promote his or her own interests within the political system.

Role of Education. The second proposition held by most citizenship and consumer educators is that deficiencies in consumer and citizen behavior are correctable through education. This proposition assumes that the economy and the polity can remain structurally unchanged but that changes in the educational system can bring desired effects in citizen and consumer behavior.

How valid is this proposition? To what extent are existing deficiencies in consumer and citizenship behavior traceable to deficiencies in the educational system? The answer to this question is by no means self-evident. A case may be made that it is the structural characteristics of our post-industrial, interdependent society with its mega institutions that inhibits the attainment of citizen and consumer competence. These features of society may be as responsible for deficiencies in citi-

zen and consumer behavior as any purported inadequacies in the educational program.

Put another way, the roles of citizen and consumer and the settings in which these roles are exercised may not be conducive to behavior that conforms to the models of "good" citizen and "good" consumer described by reformers. For example, knowledge of current issues is an attribute typically associated with citizen competence. Yet the information explosion coupled with the increasingly complex nature of political and economic issues may make it literally impossible for most people to be knowledgeable about anything more than a few issues directly relevant to them.

These, of course, are complex issues, and we will not resolve them here. Rather, my purpose is to suggest that both educators and policymakers need to think very carefully about this proposition. Perhaps we should not take literally the notion that all the deficiencies we see in consumer and citizen behavior are correctable through education. At least some of these deficiencies may stem as much from the nature of the society we live in as from the nature of the educational programs we offer. Do we attempt to change the structure of society so that it matches our normative models of citizen and consumer, or do we rethink our models to match new settings in society?

Effectiveness of Schooling. A third proposition of social educators is that schools are an effective vehicle for delivering consumer and citizenship education to people, thereby enhancing consumer and citizen competence. Thus, most consumer and citizenship educators have not accepted the charge of critics like Paul Goodman, Ivan Illich, or Christopher Jencks that schools are powerless to act as agents of social change. Rather, while recognizing various weaknesses in schools as agents of social change, they have assumed that schools are effective vehicles for social education.

Consumer education has always been seen as an integral part of the work of the consumer movement. Presidential consumer advisors and various consumer groups have long assumed that consumer education for young people can be most readily and easily provided through the public school system, and these groups have continued to urge public schools to offer more in the way of consumer education.

Social studies educators have traditionally equated citizenship education with schools and schooling. That is, the formal and informal educational processes related to citizen development that occur in elementary and high schools have been one of the focal points of social studies education. Over the years the boundaries have been set for what are considered legitimate citizenship education activities within the social studies field.

It has been fashionable in recent years to chastise the schools for their ineffectiveness in the area of citizenship education. The same seems to be true for consumer education. Critics and reformers frequently cite three shortcomings in school programs: 1) inadequate exposure to consumer or citizenship education, 2) technical incompetence, and 3) inadequate conceptualization. The first of these shortcomings seems to be a particular concern of consumer educators, because consumer education has yet to establish as secure a position in the curriculum as civic education.

The second shortcoming, technical incompetence, is, as one civic educator put it, "not knowing how to teach what we wish to teach." Technical competency involves such matters as the formulation of objectives, the design and development of instructional sequences, the evaluation of materials, and the like. Both citizenship and consumer education probably suffer from technical incompetence.

The third problem, inadequate conceptualization, is probably the most fundamental shortcoming in current school programs. It stems from the fact that traditional efforts at citizenship and consumer education are based on inadequate models of society. The most thoughtful critique of the conceptual models underlying consumer education is offered by economist Lucy Black Creighton.[3] She argues that the consumer education movement has been based on conventional economic theory wherein consumer well-being is seen in terms of getting the largest quantity of goods from a given income. In this conceptualization, understanding competitive markets and acquiring adequate product information are seen as the key to consumer well-being. That is, if the consumer has adequate information about goods and services in a free market, producers will compete with each other to provide the goods and services the consumer wants. Thus by acting to

maximize profit, producers will be compelled to provide high-quality goods at a low price. According to this theory, the consumer is sovereign.

Creighton believes this theoretical framework has led to a form of consumer education that has serious weaknesses. For example, consumer education has emphasized a penny-pinching attitude alien to most Americans, and it has stressed the need for consumers to have more information about price and quality when there is already more information available than most of us can cope with.

Further, consumer education has not adequately handled the issue of consumer choice. That is, in conventional economic theory consumer choice is a given and is not subject to interpretation in terms of a consumer's values of what is right or wrong or good or bad. In addition, because social goods and social costs are not subject to conventional market determination, conventional economic theory has led the consumer movement to focus on the goods and services individuals purchase for their own use.

In a similar way, some social scientists and educators have been critical of what might be termed a neoclassical, institutional model of the relationship between the citizen and the polity. In this framework, citizenship education tends to be equated with the formal, legal institutions of government at the local, state, and national levels. Critics claim this state-centric model has led to citizenship education that is legalistic, emphasizes the formal institution of government, and often preaches citizen loyalty and duties to the neglect of citizen rights and opportunities.[4]

Educational Change. A final proposition of both consumer and citizenship educators is that it is possible for them to effect change in the schools. This proposition has been widely accepted despite the fact that practices in consumer and citizenship education have rarely met the expectations of reformers.

Both consumer educators and citizenship educators appear to be operating on four models for producing change in the schools. These are: the technological model, the market model, the professional/client model, and the political model.

The technological model posits that if the proper curriculum materials and teacher training procedures can be created, then schools can effect change. If change doesn't occur, it means that we have yet to come up with the proper technologies.

The market model views schools as a kind of educational market with teachers, administrators, and students as consumers. Reformers say that if they could produce attractive products (innovative materials in consumer and citizenship education), the consumers would adopt and use them. According to this model, failure to induce change in schools means we are not producing products attractive enough to persuade potential consumers.

The professional/client model of educational change is patterned after the helping professions and the clinical approach found in medicine and agriculture. Educators in universities and educational labs are seen as a source of expertise regarding citizenship and consumer education. Educational change will occur when these experts or "clinicians" interact with teachers and administrators who bring specific problems to them for solution. According to this model, failure to effect change stems largely from lack of interaction between the experts and their "clients." This lack of interaction may stem from insufficient awareness on the part of "clients," the unavailability of professionals capable of assisting them, or the lack of policies for initiating and guiding such interactions.

The political model depicts educational change in a power perspective. There are at least two variants of this approach. The first might be termed a "straight power" strategy that attempts to effect change in schools through the coercive power of federal and state governmental agencies. Efforts to obtain legislative mandates for consumer education and citizenship education fit this category. A second variant might be termed the "mobilization" strategy. Users of this strategy seek to mobilize demands for educational change either at the grassroots level among teachers or at the elite level among administrators and opinion leaders.

Such models as those described above tend to guide the reform efforts of consumer and citizenship educators. They all represent variants of what might be termed an "economic approach" to educational change. This approach holds that either a demand exists for innovative

practices in schools and the challenge is to fill it (technological model, market model, professional/client model), or the challenge is to create a demand (political model) for an already existing supply of good products in consumer and citizenship education.

The fundamental premise of the economic approach to educational change—that the demands of the educational system can be met or at least can be affected by social educators alone—seems doubtful. We know that there is a close relationship between schools as social institutions and the larger society, but when the schools' values are in conflict with those dominant in the community, schools can hardly be expected to act as agents of change. Rather, they tend to respond to and often mirror changes occurring in society. That is, the schools do not change society; rather, social forces and changes occurring in society dictate new agendas for the schools.

The recent history of citizenship education can certainly be interpreted to support this assertion. In the 1930s and into the 1940s, the depression, the New Deal, and the rise of totalitarian regimes sparked a social reformist movement in America. The task of citizenship education came to be that of preparing individuals and society for collective social planning and government regulation. During the 1950s and the McCarthy era, the task of citizenship education in the schools was seen to be enhancement of student loyalties and appreciation of the values of democracy. During the 1960s, traditional citizenship education was deemphasized in favor of a kind of social science education seen by the society as necessary to keep America competitive with the Soviet Union. A similar interpretation can be made regarding the history of the consumer education movement.

This simple analysis is familiar to observers of the educational scene. The implications of the school/society relationship for reformers in social education, however, is less clear. It may be that reformers can be really effective only when they are acting as interpreters or carriers of societal demands on the schools. That is, it may well be that the educational system's "demand structure" is impervious to the efforts of reformers in social education unless reformers help school people to cope with specific demands thrust upon them by the larger society.

Assumptions Regarding Citizen and Consumer Roles

A second major assumption held by citizenship and consumer educators is that the roles of citizen and consumer are distinct and unrelated, that our activities as citizens and as consumers represent different domains of human behavior—the political and the economic. Thus those interested in citizenship education and those concerned about consumer education have assumed they were working on quite different problems. Even at the popular level, the traditional American view is that politics and economics are separate spheres of human activity, each with its peculiar institutions and norms of behavior.

This separation of citizen and consumer roles has influenced the manner in which educators and policy makers have organized themselves intellectually and practically to work on citizenship and consumer education. And this, in turn, has affected classroom instruction, curriculum development, research, and inservice activities in both citizenship and consumer education.

One indicator of the separation is seen in the content of consumer and citizenship education materials. Existing instructional materials are not well integrated. For instance, they do not deal with knowledge, skills, and problems associated with citizens acting as consumers of government services. Nor do they consider the relationship between private and public choices associated with managing large-scale technology. Nor, for example, do existing materials sensitize students to the complex relationships between private consumption behavior and the social consequences of such behavior.

Rather, most elementary-level materials treat consumer and citizenship topics as distinct and unrelated. At the junior and senior high school level, civics and government textbooks generally limit themselves to brief, legalistic descriptions of the role of the national government in the economy and the relation of government to taxation and banking. At best there are some supplementary materials in areas such as legal education and environmental education that treat consumer-related topics more directly or touch on the relationship between citizen and consumer roles.

The situation in consumer education is basically the same. For example, a recent study of current practice in the field divided the core

subject matter of consumer education into 20 topical categories such as "the consumer in the economy" or "management and family income." Only three categories—"community consumption and taxes," "consumer aid and protection," and "consumer organization"—bore any relationship to citizenship education. And, of the 108 subtopics and understandings listed under these 20 categories, only nine dealt with citizenship-related topics.[5]

A second indicator is found in social studies teaching methods textbooks. Presently none of the leading high school social studies methods textbooks contains significant material on consumer education or on the relationship between consumer education and citizenship education. Of the present elementary methods textbooks, few contain references to the place of consumer education in social studies instruction.

A final indicator of the separation between consumer and citizenship education is the lack of contact between those social scientists, policy makers, and educators interested in citizenship education and those interested in consumer education. They tend not to go to the same professional meetings, and their writings rarely appear in one another's journals. For example, *Social Education*, issued several times a year, has published only four articles related to consumer education since 1960. Often people involved in consumer and citizenship education work in different university departments or in different bureaucratic enclaves.

The assumption of separation in citizen and consumer roles is also symptomatic of other fields of social education today. In career education, environmental education, energy education, multicultural education, law-related education, and global education little has been done to show the interdependence of citizen and consumer roles. The next section will examine this interdependence.

The Relationship of Citizen and Consumer Roles

Today citizen and consumer roles involve a common domain of behavior that is increasingly related to public policy issues linking economics and politics. Indicators of this trend in American life include:

1. An increasing role for government in the economy as regulator and economic balance wheel
2. The expansion of government activity at all levels, resulting in increasing consumption of government services by citizens
3. A steady increase in the number of economic decisions made collectively in the political process
4. A growing concern for the social responsibility and group consequences of corporate behavior
5. An emerging concern for the ecological and group consequences of consumption
6. An intertwining of political and economic issues such as energy conservation, inflation, environmental quality, social security system maintenance, welfare rights, and the like
7. An increase in the number of individual decisions that have social as well as economic consequences for individuals

Along with such changes have come changes in our way of looking at the relationship between political and economic life. This is reflected in a renewed interest among social scientists in political economy as well as in a growing popular awareness of the increasing politicalization of economic life. Subject matter in both social studies and consumer education is beginning to deal with public policy decisions within government and the economic sector on issues related to conflicts between one's freedom of choice and social responsibility, one's personal liberties and the public interest. In so doing, both are aiming

at the same goal: an informed, enlightened, and involved citizenry.

Recent efforts to establish a national energy policy exemplify the growing overlap in the concerns of consumer educators and citizenship educators. Such a policy involves all citizens in making critical consumer decisions with implications for the nation and its economy. As a result, a consumer education campaign regarding energy is not just a single-purpose activity; it is a political act. Its success or failure depends on collective citizen competence.

Just how is our behavior as consumers and as citizens related? How can we think systematically about the interdependence and commonality of people's roles as citizens and as consumers? The citizen and the consumer roles are related in two important ways. First, in an increasing number of situations the roles of citizen and consumer are fused. That is, people often behave simultaneously as citizen and as consumer. This occurs, for example, when a person buys a small car as one means of supporting a national energy conservation policy.

Second, even when our actions as citizens and as consumers can be readily distinguished, there are important commonalities. The tasks we face in both roles are shaped by common historical forces, involve common skills (such as decision making), occur in similar bureaucratic settings, and involve common problems (such as alienation).

Fusion of Citizen and Consumer Roles

It was once thought that the role of consumer only had meaning in economic terms. From the early 1930s to the present, the role of consumer was defined in terms of conventional economic theory. Thus consumers were not thought of as voters or citizens but rather as individuals using goods and services for their own purposes. The accepted economic definition in a market-oriented economy like ours holds that consumers act in markets where private firms produce and sell and consumers buy and use.[6]

Common-sense observations of our own behavior and the behavior of political leaders clearly indicate that this view of the consumer role is no longer accurate or adequate. The following incidents illustrate how it is often impossible to distinguish between people acting as consumers and the same people acting as citizens:

1. The Bronson family decides to buy a car that is smaller than the one they really want. They do so because comfort and speed are less important to them than is a contribution to energy conservation, however small that may be.

2. Representatives of five of the nation's major airlines ask the U.S. Civil Aeronautics Board for a 5% fare increase. The airlines say higher fuel costs make the fare hikes necessary.

3. Members of the Consumers Action Union started to picket a supermarket chain two weeks ago. They asked people to boycott the stores. They said they would continue to picket until the supermarket chain agreed to charge the same prices in its inner-city stores as in its suburban stores.

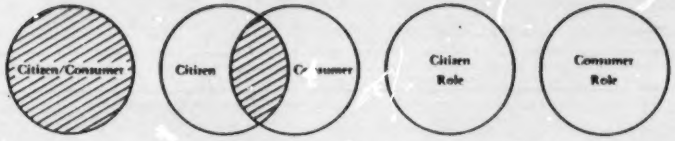
4. Mary Wilkins writes an angry letter to her senator asking that he oppose the proposed ban on saccarine by the Food and Drug Administration. Wilkins is a diabetic and fears that the ban would make it difficult and more expensive for her to obtain artificially sweetened products.

The reader could, of course, think of countless other examples. But the point is clear. In many situations the citizen and consumer roles are not separate: they are fused. Individuals are acting simultaneously as citizens and as consumers.

The concept of fusion provides a way to start thinking systematically about how consumer and citizen roles are linked. The concept also provides a starting point for planning instructional programs that integrate knowledge and skills associated with consumer and citizenship education.

The concept of fusion should be thought of as a continuous rather than an either/or phenomenon. As Figure 1 illustrates, a person's behavior as citizen and as consumer may be completely fused, partially fused, or completely distinct.

Citizenship behavior involves rights, responsibilities, and tasks associated with governance of groups such as a city, state, or nation. Group governance involves rule making, goal setting, and resource distribution among group members. Group governance is accomplished through processes that are binding for all members of the group. As members of the city, state, and nation, citizens participate in



Roles completely fused | Roles partially fused | Roles distinct

Fig. 1. Fusion of consumer and citizen roles

the problems and tasks associated with group governance.

Consumer behavior involves the acquisition and use of products and services, the maintenance of products, and the disposal of remnants or residue of products. Consumption occurs within the context of a market where there is an exchange relationship between buyers and sellers. Consumer behavior also includes activities designed to alter the structure of markets and insure consumer protection through a variety of public and private means.

The citizen role and consumer role are fused when individuals engage in consumption behavior that has consequences for group governance or when they participate in processes of group governance that affect consumer decisions, alternatives, and consumption patterns.

Many settings are likely to engage us simultaneously as consumer and as citizen, such as those that involve people in the consumption of government services. The role of government in providing goods and services to individuals and organizations has grown tremendously since World War II. Today government at different levels provides electricity through government-owned utilities, inspects the food we eat and the medicines we use, provides weather forecasts via satellites, finances low-interest mortgages, operates school buses, provides welfare payments and food stamps, trains the handicapped, runs hospitals, builds roads and dams, insures our savings accounts, regulates the stock market, and prints our money. Indeed, the list of government services today seems almost endless.

Government provision of services is part of a societal movement toward a service-consumer society. The basic framework of this emerging service-consumer society is a political economy characterized by a tremendous expansion in the production and consumption of the human services, with the most significant expansion occurring in health, education, and welfare services and in government employment.[7]

As government services have increased, so has the size and complexity of government. The expansion of government in America is most noticeable at the national level. While the nation's population in 1980 is 53 times what it was in 1795, the number of federal government workers has increased about 1,500 times since that date. A year's spending by the federal government in George Washington's first term would only pay for about seven minutes of the federal outlay in our time. In 1978 federal workers wrote about 772 million checks for an amount equal to almost one quarter of the country's total output of goods and services.

The provision of vital services by the federal government complicates the task of the citizen/consumer today. It means people must deal more often with a federal government that has become so huge that it is almost incomprehensible to the average person. The federal government, for example, employs some 2.9 million civilian workers in 11 Cabinet departments, 59 independent agencies, the U.S. Congress, and the federal court system. One in every 43 Americans today draws a federal paycheck.

The growth of federal services, however, has been more than equaled by state and local government activity. State and local governments have been adding employees at the rate of about 450,000 per year—an annual net increase equal to more than half the number of automobile plant workers.[8]

The fusion of the citizen and consumer roles prompted by the expansion of government services has resulted in the continual competition for such services. As an increasing share of personal and corporate income goes to support the service activities in the public sector, individuals acting alone and in groups compete to reclaim a share of the pie for their own consumption. Few individuals or groups, however, are happy with their share of the total pie. Some educators resent the money spent on defense because they believe it deprives schools of

adequate funds. Some farmers resent subsidies for urban centers and programs, city dwellers resent price supports for farmers, and so it goes.

This discontent has led to a situation in which an increasing number of economic decisions are being made collectively in the political process. Sociologist Daniel Bell has termed this situation the growth of nonmarket public decision making.[9] By this he means that an increasing number of problems have to be settled by the public authorities, rather than through the market mechanism. For example, organizing health care, planning cities, paying for education, cleaning up environmental pollution, and subsidizing housing construction all become matters of public concern. Thus no one can buy a share of clean air in the market; rather, communal mechanisms are necessary to deal with pollution.

Participation in such processes through voting, attempting to influence decisions and policy, or simply by observing and making judgments engage us as citizen/consumers. The amount and scope of this kind of decision making at local, state, and national levels is increasing. As this occurs, the number of situations in which we act simultaneously as consumer and as citizen is also increasing.

Many, of course, still describe the U.S. with such phrases as "capitalist nation" or "bastion of the free enterprise system." This is a good example of conceptual lag. Social reality has changed, but we continue to use traditional labels whether they fit or not. Today the U.S. actually has a very mixed economy with a steadily growing sector that we might term state capitalism. The depression of the 1930s killed whatever appetite most Americans had for a laissez faire economy. After that experience, workers, farmers, bankers, and businessmen demanded protection from the fury of the marketplace. As a result, major economic decisions are now made as if they are political decisions, and special interests determine the outcome of many economic decisions.[10]

The fusion of consumer and citizen roles in situations where economic decisions are made collectively requires the application of citizenship skills. In the marketplace as described by neoclassical economic theorists, a "decision" is reached through the multiple choices of thousands of individual consumers acting independently.

However, with nonmarket public decisions, Bell argues, "the situation is entirely different . . . [because] decision making has become 'politicalized' and subject to all the multiple, direct pressures of political decision-making."[11]

Another reason for the fusion of consumer and citizen roles is the increasing number of individual consumption decisions that have consequences for the well-being of all citizens and for the governance of the group to which they belong. For example, consumers purchasing products in indestructible containers have to be made to pay for waste disposal; otherwise, all people will be affected through the desecration of the environment. In the same way, consumers who demand services that add to retail prices or who make unjustified insurance claims also impose costs on other consumers. As the magnitude of these indirect costs to consumers increases, the social cost of public consumption increases.

As another example, millions of individual decisions by consumers over the years regarding their personal use of energy have resulted in serious problems for the governance of the U.S. They have led to efforts to create new rules and regulations regarding the development and use of energy in America. Such individual choices have also had, and will continue to have, important global and foreign policy consequences.

As the interdependence and technological complexity of our society increases, the boundaries of our decision making expand. Matters about which we could make decisions with an eye only to their short-term consequences for ourselves are becoming matters with long-term consequences that reach far beyond our personal lives, our community, and our nation. As these changes occur, we are learning that individual consumption decisions that have group consequences are inherently political and require a fusion of the citizen and consumer roles.

Thus today the role of consumer has come to have meaning in more than economic terms. I have suggested three instances in which fusion of consumer and citizen roles occurs: situations involving the consumption of government services, situations in which economic decisions are made collectively in the political process, and situations involving individual consumption decisions with social consequences. I

will now discuss important commonalities in citizen and consumer roles even when they are not fused.

Commonalities in Citizen and Consumer Roles

Four factors that citizen role behavior and consumer role behavior often have in common are:

1. Both citizen and consumer roles are subject to the same historical forces.

2. In both citizen and consumer roles people face a set of common problems.

3. Both citizen and consumer roles are played out in increasingly similar settings.

4. In both citizen and consumer roles people often behave in comparable ways.

Historical Forces. As both consumers and citizens we are affected by a set of common historical forces. Consideration of these forces can help us understand the problems people confront as citizens and as consumers. It can also alert us to important instructional opportunities for dealing with problems faced by citizenship educators and consumer educators.

1. Global Interdependence. A major historical force is the globalization of the human condition. This force cuts across all sectors of the human experience and has critical implications for our behavior as citizens and as consumers. Although some might wish otherwise, global interdependence is an inescapable condition that we must deal with. As Harlan Cleveland points out, "We should recognize that interdependence is not something to be for or against, but a fact to be lived with now and reckoned with in the future."[12]

Despite growing attention to interdependence, we are only beginning to appreciate the impact of this change on our lives as citizens and on the task of citizenship education. People now confront the tasks and responsibilities of citizenship in a global or internationalized context. Longshoremen, for example, decide whether or not to load American grain on ships bound for the Soviet Union; a group of business leaders seeks to influence a state legislature to provide financial inducements to foreign companies to locate in their state; members of a university

committee vote to restrict programs for foreign students; or local church members judge it unfair that policy toward the world food problem is set by their national headquarters rather than by the local group.

In addition, the rise of global interdependence, with the increasing flow of people, things, and information across national boundaries, means that each of us is becoming a participant in an international social order as well as a citizen in a national, state, and local community.

Recent gasoline shortages and debate about import quotas on foreign steel and television sets have heightened our awareness of the way global interdependence affects us as consumers. In our daily lives we quickly become aware of how we are linked as consumers to a variety of international processes. In a typical day the American consumer, for instance, may be awakened by a Japanese clock radio, drink morning coffee from Brazil, drive to work in an Italian Fiat on tires made of Malayan rubber, buy Saudi Arabian gasoline, and listen on a German-made radio to a news report about a visiting Chinese trade delegation.

Our contact with the rest of the world as consumers is not limited only to individual purchasing decisions. Money we put in a savings account at a local bank may be reinvested in an apartment complex in Chile. A donation to a medical foundation may help build data processing facilities that permit scientists in Indianapolis, Geneva, and several African cities to exchange data on biological controls for harmful insects. A business investment in a local industry helps produce weapons that kill people in distant lands. These kinds of linkages implicate the individual consumer in relationships extending to all areas of the globe. They involve us in housing policy in Chile, health care in Nigeria, international scientific networks, and death in far-off places. They link our lives to the lives of Japanese factory workers, laborers on Malayan rubber plantations, and corporate executives in Germany and Italy.

Increasing global interdependence implies that students of both consumer education and citizenship education must develop an awareness of the linkages between economic and political conditions on a worldwide basis. To see how your nation, your community, and you

as an individual are linked to other nations, communities, and people will lead to an awareness of the interdependence of all the peoples of the world.

2. Growth of Large Institutions. In discussing the citizen/consumer role, we noted that increased consumption of government services was correlated with the growth of government at all levels. The growth of massive social institutions in both the political and economic sectors of society affects people in their individual roles as consumer and citizen. Coping with big government complicates enormously the tasks of citizens and citizenship education. Traditional models of democratic government no longer provide an accurate or adequate structure for development of citizenship education programs. A big, powerful, remote government will require citizenship educators to rethink the citizen's relationship to government.

Similarly, consumer educators will need to reassess their approaches in light of the growth of massive economic institutions. Conventional economic theory has bound consumer educators to an inaccurate view of the way modern industrial societies operate. In modern society fewer and fewer industries operate in a manner congruent with the theory of a "pure" competitive marketplace. Yet consumer educators continue to act as if this were the case. Actually, the growing affluence of consumers in this century has been made possible by complex technology and the economics of scale inherent in mass production. As one economist has explained, "The wide choice in goods and services and the increased standard of living available to most American consumers . . . comes not through small organizations with whom consumers can have face-to-face contact but through large organizations, intrinsically powerful because of their size and their expertise."[13]

3. Technological Innovation. Technology is another historical force affecting people in both their consumer and citizen roles. Technology has unleashed the unprecedented productivity that undergirds advanced industrial society; it has given national governments almost unimaginable tools of violence and has created social problems requiring new forms of government intervention; and it has created the contemporary mass media and an information explosion of vast proportions.

Sophisticated technology confronts people in their consumer and citizen roles with an array of issues undreamed of even two decades ago. Which stereo receiver will produce the least harmonic distortion in the mid-ranges? Is cellulose or vermiculite a better form of insulation for use in unfinished areas of the home? Should the government proceed with the development of more nuclear power plants or divert resources to solar energy production? Should local governments restrict recombinant DNA experimentation at local universities and laboratories? What, if anything, can the Environmental Protection Agency do about the depletion of the ozone layer as a result of increasing fluorocarbons in the upper atmosphere?

High technology and the information explosion pose interesting challenges for both citizenship and consumer educators. For instance, proponents of a certain public policy present "objective" information that supports the policy, regulation, or legislative action that is of benefit to them. However, the same information can be and often is introduced to support very different and even contradictory policies. And even in today's information-rich environment, data about complex technological issues may be incomplete and hard to obtain. Providing consumers with more information about goods and services has traditionally been a prime goal of consumer educators—almost an article of faith. Yet some consumer educators have begun to question whether such a goal is attainable or even relevant when we have such a high level of technological complexity and specialization.

Common Problems and Similar Settings. One of the hallmarks of our postindustrial society is the fact that a significant number of the tasks we face in our roles as consumer and citizen are carried out in bureaucratic settings. For example, when an individual consumer disputes a bill with the telephone company, he or she is acting within a bureaucratic structure with essentially the same characteristics as the Internal Revenue Service. As another example, the impersonalized, hierarchical structure one confronts when dealing with a massive corporation such as General Motors is in many ways similar to that of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services or the Social Security Administration.

Along with the growth of big government and big business has

come an increase in professionalism, technocratic decision making, and bureaucracy in the political and economic sectors of society. When organizations reach a certain size, whether they be corporations, universities, labor unions, or governments, they take on bureaucratic characteristics, i.e., specialization of labor, hierarchy or fixed lines of command, and job security incentives. Such characteristics can contribute to impersonality, devotion to rules at the cost of individual values, rigidity, and too much paperwork.

These bureaucratic characteristics can present problems for people as consumers and as citizens. One of the problems is alienation, a feeling of powerlessness and normlessness. The limited opportunities the average person has to participate in the formulation of bureaucratic policy can lead to a sense of powerlessness. Most individuals assume a norm of relatively equal treatment by bureaucratic officials. Lack of congruence between this norm and actual behavior may be perceived as a deterioration of institutional standards or normlessness.

A second problem faced by citizen and consumer alike is coping with esoteric and jargon-filled language associated with bureaucracy of all kinds. The examples below are all too familiar:

1. Redevelopment Land Agency Memo: "In order to avoid negative reflections as a result of dysfunctional internal communications, and in order to enhance the possibilities of coordinated balances . . . any item having a direct or indirect effect on the NW #1 Project Area . . . [should] . . . be made known . . . before, rather than after its occurrence, when possible."

2. State Education Department Regulation: "Compensations received as a result of reimbursement from a contracted third party or agency for supplemental nonteaching services rendered in addition to the full-time contract may not be subject to contributions to the State Teachers Retirement System."

3. Appliance Warranty: "Except to the extent prohibited by applicable law, no other warranties, whether express or implied, including warranties of merchantability and fitness for a particular purpose shall apply to this unit."

At worst such language can be used as a powerful technique for exercising control of and even victimizing clients of a bureaucracy. At

best it is an unintentional but powerful barrier to communication between citizen/consumers and the bureaucracy. In the public sector the language problem often is seen in government regulations and statements of qualifications for government programs. In the private sector the language problem is found in complicated insurance policies, warranties, loan terms, and the like.

Comparable Behavior. Another commonality in the citizen and consumer roles is the assumption of individual rationality, when, in fact, people's behavior in consumer and citizen roles is frequently irrational. Neither consumer nor citizen behavior is individually and independently determined. Rather, social and cultural factors, including television, advertising, and fellow workers and neighbors all have a great impact on the decisions we make as consumers and as citizens.

Classical democratic political theory holds that citizens have "an independent and definite will in the political sphere" and will know and pursue the common good. This economic theory of democracy holds that political man is rational and that the political institutions he has developed are rational. In this view, citizens are informed; they study issues and candidates for office carefully, weigh alternatives and consequences, and vote in ways calculated to maximize personal benefits and minimize costs.

Classical economic theory holds that firms act to maximize profits and consumers act to maximize their ability to purchase goods and services at minimum cost. The rational consumer will buy what goods and services will go furthest toward satisfying his or her needs and wants. And consumers will know the prices and quality of all the goods produced, so that they can choose products of the highest quality selling at the lowest price. Put simply, rational consumers will buy goods that provide them with the greatest pleasure, satisfaction, or utility.

Research on voting behavior and consumer buying clearly indicates that people do not behave in the "rational" manner described in classical democratic and economic theory. Voters are ill-informed about politics in general and about issues in a particular election campaign. They are usually not personally involved in political campaigns and

they have little political motivation. Voters can be easily manipulated by the mass media and slick advertising. Their views about what is going on during a campaign are likely to be determined far more by advertising and by their previous political attitudes than by independently gathered, accurate information.

People consume not only for the intrinsic values they find in products but also for the status that derives from what Veblen called conspicuous consumption. Consumers are not very well educated in making spending decisions, and they are easily influenced by advertising. They have little motivation to do research on their purchases and often buy on impulse. Consumers usually do not want to analyze their reasons for spending or to justify particular purchases. In short, traditional assumptions about the rationality of citizen and consumer behavior are erroneous. Both as citizens and as consumers, individuals often display irrational behavior.

Basic Competencies: Guidelines for Linking Citizenship and Consumer Education

Citizenship and consumer educators share key assumptions and are concerned with an increasingly common domain of social behavior. In this section I shall specify guidelines for curriculum specialists and others responsible for integrating citizenship and consumer education.

Elsewhere I have described in greater detail seven basic citizenship competencies.[14] These competencies can be used as a starting point for educators who want to link citizenship and consumer education. The competencies are:

1. Competence in acquiring and processing information about issues and problems
2. Competence in assessing one's involvement and stake in political/economic issues, decisions, and policies
3. Competence in making thoughtful decisions
4. Competence in developing and using standards to make judgments about people, institutions, policies, and decisions
5. Competence in communicating ideas to other citizens, decision makers, leaders, and officials
6. Competence in working with others in groups and organizations to achieve mutual goals
7. Competence in working with bureaucratically organized institutions in order to promote and protect one's interests and values.

These seven types of competencies are common to our behavior, whether we are acting in a fused citizen/consumer role or independently as citizens or consumers. They can be used to develop integrated citizen/consumer education programs at different grade levels. Where

complete integration of citizenship and consumer education is not possible or desirable, the competencies can be used as guidelines to insure better articulation between distinct programs and to reinforce common skills and knowledge.

Let us now look more closely at each of the seven competencies to identify 1) what experiences will give individuals the chance to acquire and to practice the competency and 2) what behavior will demonstrate the attainment of some level of proficiency with each competency.

Under each competency I have listed certain capacities that involve complex mixes of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that are unique to each individual according to his or her state of development.

1. Acquiring and Using Information
   - 1.1 Use newspapers and magazines to obtain current information and opinions about issues and problems
   - 1.2 Use books, maps, charts, and other sources
   - 1.3 Recognize the unique advantages and disadvantages of radio and television as sources of information about issues and problems
   - 1.4 Identify and acquire information from public and private sources such as government agencies and community groups
   - 1.5 Obtain information from fellow citizens by asking appropriate questions
   - 1.6 Evaluate the validity and quality of information
   - 1.7 Organize and use information collected

How can I learn what benefits I am entitled to under the Medicare system? Is a permit needed to remodel a front porch? In what instances should I go to a small claims court? What are the likely consequences of voting yes on a referendum to require deposits on all soft drink containers? All individuals need to acquire and use information in their roles as citizen and consumer. Adolescents, for example, need such competencies as they look for groups to share their interests in ecology or as they apply for a work permit. Adults need such competencies when they vote in a referendum on whether to lower property taxes.

Processing information means evaluating, organizing, and using information. One may, of course, acquire information simply because some topic or problem is of personal interest. In our citizen/consumer

role, however, competence requires that we use information that leads us to a better understanding of a problem or to a solution.

2. Assessing Involvement
   - 2.1 Identify a wide range of implications for an event or condition
   - 2.2 Identify ways individual actions and beliefs can produce consequences
   - 2.3 Identify your rights and obligations in a given situation

Will defeat of the school bond issue affect property values in my neighborhood? How might a change of government in the Middle East affect my plan to drive to the West Coast next summer? Do I have an obligation to attend the next committee meeting? Utility company officials want to raise rates. What are my rights? Assessing one's involvement or stake in political/economic events requires a capacity to identify the implications of an event or policy. Does, for example, the decision to build a superhighway through town affect only those whose homes will be lost, or does it also have an impact on merchants, trucking companies, paving contractors, and engineers?

Competence here also involves a capacity to identify ways individual actions and beliefs produce consequences in small and large groups. For example, the competent union member sees the potential relationship between economic welfare, declining union membership, and a shop steward's request for help with a recruitment drive. Competence involves the capacity to see how individual behavior has consequences for the broader community. The competent citizen/consumer can see, for example, how failure to conserve energy in his or her home is not an isolated act but rather a behavior that, if repeated by many citizens in a community, can lead to problems for all.

3. Making Decisions
   - 3.1 Develop realistic alternatives
   - 3.2 Identify the consequences of alternatives for self and others
   - 3.3 Determine goals or values involved in a decision
   - 3.4 Assess the consequences of alternatives based on stated values or goals

As citizens and consumers we constantly have to make choices about alternative courses of action. In addition, we often cooperate in

group decision-making activities. For example, when we serve on a committee or vote in an election we are taking part in group decision-making processes. Over a lifetime as citizen/consumers we face an incredible variety of decisions. These include selecting leaders, deciding how to manage and resolve conflict, choosing ways to conserve energy during a gasoline shortage, determining which among competing goals to support, such as reaching full employment or reducing inflation.

There are four elements of decision making we can use as consumers and citizens, whether deciding to buy a new television set or deciding for whom to vote in a mayoral election. The four elements constitute a problem-solving routine that involves a variety of thinking skills and is usable with many kinds of decisions. These four elements, with examples for both the citizen and consumer role, are:

1. Confrontation with the need for choice: An occasion for decision is a problem situation where the solution is not obvious. For example, the mayoral election is coming up and there are several attractive candidates, or one's old black-and-white television breaks down and needs expensive repairs.

2. Determination of important values or goals affecting the decision: For example, in the case of the election, one goal might be to choose a candidate who will support local schools. In the case of the old television, one goal might be to spend as little money as possible.

3. Identification of alternative courses of action: For example, should one support an older candidate with a record for getting things done or an inexperienced candidate who has expressed concern for the schools? Should one repair the old television or buy a new one—perhaps a color set?

4. Predicting the positive and negative consequences of alternatives: For example, the inexperienced candidate may support the schools but not be able to get anything done. Repairing the old television set deprives one of color television, but it is much cheaper—if the old set doesn't break down again.

In different situations these elements of decision making may apply unequally. For example, in some situations one may know the available alternatives but be unclear as to what one's goals really are. In

other situations the heart of the decision-making task may be to think of alternatives for reaching a desired goal. In yet other situations alternatives and goals may be clearly known, but the real challenge is to predict accurately the consequences of alternatives.

Making value judgments is also an important facet of both consumer and citizen decision making. We make value judgments when labeling consequences as negative or positive. While establishing goals, the consumer or citizen decision maker engages in clarification of values and ethical reasoning. This clarification involves asking, "What do I want?" and "What is right or wrong in this situation?" Decision makers who lack skill in analyzing or clarifying their values

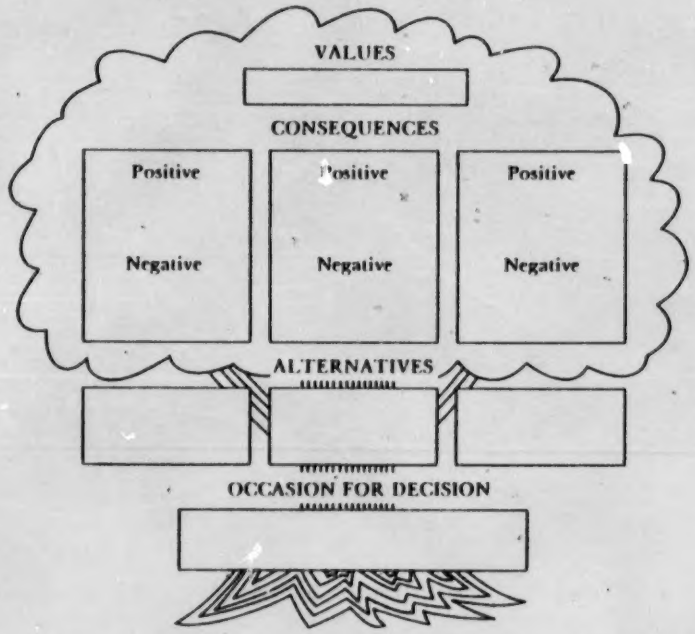


Fig. 2. The Decision Tree

may choose alternatives that unwittingly contradict their values.

The Decision Tree (Figure 2) is a simple analytical tool that graphically represents the four elements of decision making described above. It has been used successfully in citizenship education to help students learn to clarify and make decisions.[15] The device could be used with equal success in consumer education programs. The Decision Tree is based on a well-known problem-solving technique used in management science and decision theory to create maps of possible alternatives and consequences. The results of this process look like a branching tree. By using the Decision Tree, students can have direct experience with clarifying and making choices.

4. Making Judgments
   - 4.1 Identify and, if necessary, develop appropriate criteria for making a judgment
   - 4.2 Apply the criteria to known facts
   - 4.3 Periodically reassess criteria
   - 4.4 Recognize that others may apply different criteria to a problem

Was the mayor's decision to buy new snowplows a wise use of tax money? What criteria should we use to judge whether the proposal to locate a nuclear power plant in our county is good or bad? How should we evaluate the performance of the President's international trade policies last year? To judge something is to decide its worth. The judgments we make as consumers and citizens involve the use of criteria. For example, the use of majority rule is one criterion for judging whether a group makes decisions democratically. Or the amount of protein per serving is one criterion for judging the nutritional value of food.

As we develop into adult citizens and consumers we learn criteria to make many different judgments associated with each kind of role behavior. For example, we learn early on that honesty is a standard for judging the worth of a political candidate. We learn that symmetry is a standard for judging the beauty of a product. Criteria for making judgments should be periodically reassessed in light of changing purposes, knowledge, experiences, and values. For example, it was once thought that horsepower and speed were sufficient criteria to judge the performance of automobile engines. Today, however, we realize that

miles-per-gallon of gasoline and pollution emission levels are also important criteria in judging engines.

5. Communicating
   - 5.1 Develop reasons supporting your point of view
   - 5.2 Present these viewpoints to friends, neighbors, and acquaintances
   - 5.3 Present these viewpoints in writing to public officials, political leaders, and to newspapers and magazines
   - 5.4 Present these viewpoints at public meetings such as committee meetings, school board meetings, city government sessions, etc.

Competence in communicating one's ideas is essential to individuals of all ages when they wish to make their opinions known on an issue or problem. We need such competence when we try to influence the decision of a public official or when we need to provide information in order to obtain benefits from a government bureaucracy.

Communicating information and ideas to political leaders and other officials has become increasingly challenging as the scale of society and the complexity of issues has increased. Today one may need to communicate with officials in a bewildering array of public and private agencies far removed from one's immediate community. As we noted earlier, communicating with such officials often involves coping with esoteric jargon and a cobweb of regulations and procedures.

6. Cooperating
   - 6.1 Clearly present your ideas about group tasks and problems
   - 6.2 Assume various roles in a group
   - 6.3 Tolerate ambiguity
   - 6.4 Manage or cope with disagreement within the group
   - 6.5 Interact with others using democratic principles
   - 6.6 Work with others of different race, sex, culture, ethnicity, age, and ideology

The ability to exert influence in public affairs and to take action has become an important goal in both citizenship and the consumer movement. The effective citizen/consumer is a doer, able to advocate ideas, bargain, organize resources, and administer people and things.

Effective citizenship and consumer behavior requires skill in participating as a group member.

In our large-scale, complex society the most realistic means by which most individuals exert influence in public affairs is participation in a variety of small groups such as councils, task forces and committees. The competence for working in such groups involves a range of human relations skills necessary for relating effectively to others. These competencies have a distinctly affective dimension.

7. Promoting interest
   - 7.1 Recognize one's interests and goals in a given situation
   - 7.2 Identify an appropriate strategy for a given situation
   - 7.3 Work through organized groups to support one's interest
   - 7.4 Use legal remedies to protect one's rights and interests
   - 7.5 Identify and use the established grievance procedures within a bureaucracy or organization

A teenager registers with the Bureau of Motor Vehicles to obtain a driver's license and in the same week visits his father's union office to learn how to qualify for college scholarship benefits available from the union. A group of irate homeowners files a complaint with the state insurance commission against a disreputable home insurance company. These are examples of dealing with large institutions that have an increasing influence on our daily lives. Competence in dealing effectively with bureaucratically organized institutions is increasingly a part of the citizen/consumer role. As citizens, individually and with others, we interact with large, bureaucratic institutions in two ways. First, we are consumers or recipients of public services and products of such institutions—particularly government institutions. Second, we increasingly look to various agencies to promote our interests, values, and causes. Thus, for example, blacks, Mexican-Americans and American Indians may look to the Department of Justice to promote their civil rights. Citizens concerned with environmental quality attempt to promote their interests through federal, state, and local environmental agencies. Similarly, citizen groups often must work with consumer agencies as well as large corporations in order to promote and protect their economic interests.

Conclusion

I undertook this examination of citizenship and consumer education because of my concern for the growing specialization in the content and process of social education. In recent years educators, foundation officials, and government policy makers have sometimes acted as if our increasing social complexity could simply be mirrored in the social education of our youth. Within the U.S. Department of Education, for example, there are currently separately legislated programs for consumer education, law-related education, and global education. Similarly, a recent Education Commission of the States report identifies 12 substantially different areas of content and/or approach that are commonly associated with citizenship education.[18]

Some diversity is, of course, desirable in social education. Teachers, students, and communities vary in their needs. Further, something can be said in favor of having advocates of various approaches lobby for space in the curriculum. Such competition can require proponents of different curricular offerings to sharpen their thinking as they attempt to justify their cases. Finally, few would want to impose some type of dull conformity on social education in America.

Still, in my judgment we may be reaching a point where the quality of social education in America will not be significantly enhanced until the trend toward increased specialization is reversed or at least slowed down. In turn, the fragmentation of social education will not be moderated until we seriously rethink the assumptions and models which support that education and until we develop new, unifying frameworks that can link or integrate various approaches in social education. The need is to develop frameworks for a *common* social

education that preserves the richness of diversity in our complex society.

Serious rethinking of existing assumptions about the integration of social education will not occur spontaneously. Teachers and administrators are too involved with the day-to-day operation of their schools to initiate and sustain such an effort. Social scientists and university-based educators will need to rethink traditional political/economic models of society and of social behavior, and cross or at least stretch disciplinary and professional boundaries.

The concept of citizenship appears to be the most basic and useful starting point for the development of a unifying conception for social education. Certainly this starting point would not be alien to our tradition in social education. Unfortunately, despite its rich intellectual history, in recent years the citizenship concept has been largely neglected by social scientists. They consider it unworthy of rigorous conceptual analysis and research. Partly as a result of such neglect, educators have found few useful guidelines for dealing with the concept and implementing new programs based on it.

Nevertheless, the citizenship concept is basic to social education. Every society confronts the problem of transforming individuals into citizens equipped with the cognitive, emotional, and social competencies requisite to managing their relations with the natural and cultural environment in effective and responsible ways. In this fastback I have tried to demonstrate the linkages between citizenship education and consumer education in the curriculum. Those linkages can provide one useful starting point for integrating social education.

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Supports programs and educational activities in consumer education. Publishes reports on the current state of the art and a list of publications.

Social Science Education Consortium, 855 Broadway, Boulder, CO 80302.

A major source of information on current activities, programs, and materials in citizenship/social studies/social science education. Houses the ERIC Clearinghouse for Social Studies and Social Sciences.